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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, Dog control problems are created by people and are not limited to a breed or mix; singling out breeds of dogs as vicious or banning them only shifts the responsibility from the dog owner, where it belongs, to the breed of dog and does not solve community dog problems; and

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WHEREAS, Banning a breed or declaring it inherently vicious punishes responsible dog owners and drives conscientious citizens out of communities; irresponsible owners, who often raise dogs to be vicious, are often not law abiding citizens and will only turn to another breed to continue their criminal activities; and

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WHEREAS, Banning a breed or particular mix of breeds punishes those dogs that serve important community functions, including therapy dogs, assistance dogs for handicapped owners, search and rescue dogs, drug-sniffing dogs, and police dogs and drives them out of the community; and

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WHEREAS, Breed bans that target "pit bulls" cannot be enforced because "pit bull" is a generic term that refers to many different breeds and mixes; the American Veterinary Medical Association and several state veterinary medical associations are on record as opposing breed-specific legislation because breeds and mixes are hard to identify; and

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WHEREAS, Breeds that have been recently labeled by the media as vicious have a long and commendable history of serving man; to label all as vicious for the actions of a few is wrong; therefore, be it

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RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that the State of Illinois should encourage municipalities not to

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1 enact breed-specific bans; instead, municipalities are  
2 encouraged to establish programs that educate residents and  
3 pass laws targeting irresponsible dog owners rather than their  
4 dogs; and be it further

5       RESOLVED, That municipalities should be encouraged to  
6 address animal attacks by enforcing laws that encourage  
7 responsible and humane treatment of dogs and all other animals;  
8 teaching communities about responsible dog ownership, creating  
9 awareness, and punishing illegal dog fighting are effective  
10 strategies for keeping communities safe.